

May 15, 2013

NORWIN SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWS RELEASE

CONTACT: Jonathan Szish, Coordinator of School and Community Relations, 724-861-3000 ext. 1150

**SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMUNITY FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES \$3,787 FOR TEACHER PROJECTS  
Grant Program Funds Four Innovative Proposals That Will Benefit at Least 690 Students Next School Year**

NORTH HUNTINGDON — Next school year, some Norwin students will experience the work of forensic scientists, learn CPR, read more non-fiction texts, or build their own water filters thanks to a third year of educational funding from the Norwin School District Community Foundation.

This month, the Norwin School District Community Foundation announced \$3,787 in *Educator Innovations Grant* awards for four educational projects that will benefit at least 690 students in the 2013-2014 school year. The Foundation is a non-profit group affiliated with Norwin School District.

The Foundation’s competitive *Educator Innovations Grant* program challenges District teachers to dream up an innovative classroom project that might not otherwise be funded by the school budget. An independent review team scores applications without knowing the identities of those who applied. This year, teachers could ask for up to \$1,000, and twelve applications were submitted. Here are the four recipients:



Dr. John C. Boylan, president of the Norwin School District Community Foundation, with the teachers who received *Educator Innovations Grants* for classroom projects. From left: Kelly Sevin and Trisha Brunazzi, both of Stewartsville Elementary School; Paula Giran of Hillcrest Intermediate School; Amy Proctor of Sheridan Terrace Elementary School; and Cris Ritenour of Norwin Middle School.

2013-14 Grant Recipient/s	School Building	Project Title	Project Description	Amount Awarded	Projected No. of Students to Benefit
Ms. Paula Giran	Hillcrest Intermediate School	<i>Who Dunit?</i>	Students will do the work of forensic scientists, making what they do in class authentic. Students will learn by doing in this new forensic science unit. Using science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, they will process simulated crime scenes, analyze lab data, conduct scientific investigations, analyze fingerprints and blood types, learn about chromatography and DNA, explore the worlds of forensic anthropology, entomology, and arson investigation, and interact with guest speakers.	\$900	50 gifted students in Grades 5 and 6 at Hillcrest Intermediate.
Ms. Cris Ritenour	Norwin Middle School	<i>CPR &amp; AED for Family and Friends</i>	According to the American Heart Association, approximately 80 percent of cardiac arrests occur at home and about 92 percent of sudden cardiac arrest victims die before they get to the hospital. Statistics show that immediate cardiopulmonary resuscitation can more than double a victim's chance of survival, and that anyone, at any age, is capable of learning CPR. The goal of <i>CPR &amp; AED for Family and Friends</i> is to teach students how to perform basic, life-saving techniques so that if the situation ever arose, they could properly evaluate an emergency situation, provide the proper care, and take advantage of the automated external defibrillators that are located in most public buildings.	\$987	440 students in Grade 7 (the entire seventh grade) at Middle School.
Ms. Amy Proctor	Sheridan Terrace Elementary School	<i>Common Core: Raising the Bar with Nonfiction Text</i>	With the adoption of the new Common Core Standards, educators must prepare their students for the ever-growing challenges in Literacy. One key element to the Common Core Standards is the expectation that students' texts will consist of 50% nonfiction. Currently, Sheridan Terrace Elementary School has a guided reading book room for teachers to use during guided reading; however, there are a limited number of non-fiction texts available for the third and fourth-graders. This grant will purchase research-based nonfiction texts that will meet the diverse needs of third and fourth-grade students at Sheridan Terrace Elementary School.	\$1000	150 students in Grades 3 and 4 at Sheridan Terrace Elementary.
Ms. Kelly Sevin and Ms. Trisha Brunazzi	Stewartsville Elementary School	<i>Water, Water, Everywhere: Designing Water Filters</i>	This project engages students in STEM education and teaches them to apply their knowledge of water purification and its importance for living organisms. Students will first think like environmental engineers as they review a mural of a small American community, noting possible sources of pollution and suggesting ways to clean up or eliminate the source of the pollution. Students will then focus on the environmental engineering problem of providing safe drinking water as they plan, construct, test, and improve their own water filters.	\$900	50 students in Grade 3 at Stewartsville Elementary School.

These teachers will also be recognized at in-service day in August.

“We are pleased to have received the greatest number of applications to date and to have sufficient donations to fund four outstanding educational projects,” said Dr. John C. Boylan, president of the Foundation’s Board of Directors. “As more people become aware of the excellent learning opportunities made possible by these grants, we anticipate an increase in donations, which will fund even more projects benefiting Norwin students.”

Funds for this third year of Educator Innovations Grants came from Westmoreland County Day of Giving in 2012, in which donors, on a single day, made online contributions that were partially matched by the Community Foundation of Westmoreland County. Fund-raising continued with a special, second-annual Miniature Golf Outing on Friday, April 26, 2013, at Kerber’s Dairy in North Huntingdon.

The Foundation hopes to increase its support of innovative educational programs in the future, and has tried to increase its impact during the three years of the Educator Innovations Grant program. In the 2011-2012 school year, the Foundation awarded three grants worth a total of \$1,500. In 2012-2013, the Foundation awarded three grants worth a total of \$2,500. And for the upcoming school year, the Foundation is awarding four grants worth a total of \$3,787.

The Foundation exists to provide enrichment to students of the Norwin School District. It does this by maintaining more than a dozen scholarship funds created by local families, and also by supporting innovative educational programming that might not otherwise be funded through the School District budget. It is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors and has a Web site at [www.norwinsd.org/foundation](http://www.norwinsd.org/foundation).

###